

[ Amend the following claims: ]

- 1 20. (Amended) A method for cutting a link between interconnected circuits comprising the following steps:

directing a laser upon an electrically-conductive cut-link pad conductively bonded between a first electrically-conductive line and a second electrically-conductive line on a substrate, the cut-link pad having substantially less thermal resistance per unit length than each of the first and second lines, wherein the width of the cut-link pad is at least ten percent greater than the width of each of the first and second electrically-conductive lines; and

maintaining the laser upon the cut-link pad until the laser infuses sufficient energy into the cut-link pad to break the conductive link across the cut-link pad between the pair of electrically-conductive lines.

- 11 31. (Amended) [The method of Claim 20] A method for cutting a link between interconnected circuits comprising the following steps:

directing a laser upon an electrically-conductive cut-link pad conductively bonded between a first electrically-conductive line and a second electrically-conductive line on a substrate, the cut-link pad having substantially less thermal resistance per unit length than each of the first and second lines, wherein the [material comprising] the cut-link pad is formed of a material that has greater thermal conductivity than the material [comprising] that forms each of the first and second electrically-conductive lines; and

maintaining the laser upon the cut-link pad until the laser infuses sufficient energy into the cut-link pad to break the conductive link across the cut-link pad between the pair of electrically-conductive lines.

- 13 33. (Amended) The method of Claim 20, [further comprising] wherein a passivative layer [covering] covers the cut-link pad.

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14 34. (Amended) [The method of Claim 33, wherein the] A method for cutting a link between interconnected circuits comprising the following steps:

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directing a laser upon an electrically-conductive cut-link pad conductively bonded between a first electrically-conductive line and a second electrically-conductive line on a substrate, the cut-link pad having substantially less thermal resistance per unit length than each of the first and second lines, wherein the cut-link pad is covered with a passivative layer that is harder than the substrate; and

maintaining the laser upon the cut-link pad until the laser infuses sufficient energy into the cut-link pad to break the conductive link across the cut-link pad between the pair of electrically-conductive lines.

#### REMARKS

The following amendments were made to the claims. Claim 20 has been amended to add the limitations of original Claim 25. Accordingly, original Claim 25 has been canceled. Claim 31 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of Claim 20, from which Claim 31 previously depended. Additionally, minor, non-substantive grammatical changes were made to Claim 31. The form of Claim 33 was changed to better accord with the standard form of a method claim. Claim 34 was amended to incorporate the subject matter of Claims 20 and 33, from which Claim 34 previously depended. No new matter has been added.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 20-24, 32-33 and 36-38 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,608,257, issued to Lee *et al.* (hereafter, referred to as "Lee").

The Examiner indicated that Claims 25-30 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 20 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of original Claim 25. Consequently, Claim 20, which is now equivalent to original Claim 25, and all claims dependent therefrom are believed to be allowable.

The Examiner stated that Claim 31 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 31 has been so amended and is therefore believed to be allowable in its current form.

The Examiner indicated that Claims 34 and 35 would also be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 34 has been so amended, and both claims are therefore believed to be allowable.

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